

Hemingfords Scrapbook 1897 to 1990
Facts, Features and (occasional) Fallacies
reported in Cambridge Newspapers
summarised by
Mike Petty

Most of these stories originally appeared in the Cambridge Daily/Evening/News or the Cambridgeshire Weekly News, its sister title.

They are supplemented by some articles published in the
Cambridge Independent Press or Cambridge Chronicle

Most were featured in my 'Looking Back' column in the Cambridge News from 1996-2014

The complete 'Cambridgeshire Scrapbook' of which this is a small section is published online at
bit.ly/CambsCollection

I have digital and other copies of most of the stories summarised.
I hope to publish these online one day. If you would like them in the meantime then please get in touch.

The original volumes are housed in the Cambridgeshire Collection at Cambridge Central Library where
there are many other indexes dating back to 1770.

They also have detailed newspaper cuttings files on over 750 topics that have been compiled since the
1960s.

Newspapers sometimes get things wrong. I copy things out incorrectly. Do check

There are a multitude of spelling and layout errors. Please forgive or correct them

News never stops but this file was finished on 31 August 2016.

I will maintain supplements and corrections – contact me for anything you need

Please make what use of these notes that you may. Kindly remember where they came from

See my website – www.mikepetty.org.uk for further notes.

Mike Petty, Stretham

2017

1897 09 04

An inquiry was held in the schoolroom at Hemingford Grey into the proposal of the Parish Council to borrow £300 for the purposes of providing a burial ground. The new burial ground is necessary in consequence of the churchyard being practically full, it not having been enlarged since 1838. The Council has tried in six different parts of the parish to find a suitable place. It is proposed to purchase half of the orchard belonging to Mr John Giddons in Pound road. This site is about as dry a spot as could be obtained

1898 01 21

The first annual meeting of the St Ives and District Nursing Association was held in the Corn Exchange, St Ives. The number of cases attended have been 117 of which 71 were in St Ives, 19 in Fenstanton and 27 in Hemingford. Of these eight have died, five have been removed to hospital and 90 have recovered. Twenty of the cases were accidents, several of them serious, and of such a nature as to make removal to the hospital difficult, so that the patients derived much benefit from skilled nursing in their own homes.

1898 07 13

A representative of the press paid a visit to Hemingford Abbots, for the purpose of gathering information from one of the village maidens who had been suffering from what had been described as an incurable complaint. The young person to be interviewed was Miss Lizzie Watson. Rapping at the cottage door the reporter was confronted by a tall young damsel with a fresh coloured complexion - the object of his search. She said she had been ill for many months, suffering fearful pains in her body. She had been treated by two medical men but obtained no relief. "I am all right now," she added smiling. "To what do you tribute your recovery?" asked the interviewer. "Dr Williams Pink Pills for Pale People, and nothing else," was the reply

1898 08 05

The new Reading Room at Hemingford Grey was opened and the outside of this handsome little place was gaily decorated with flags. It is a well-built building. Sir Arthur W Marshall spoke of the cheapness of books and newspapers, of the starting of public libraries while even their villages had their public rooms and bookshops. The Reverend D E Curtois spoke of the desirability of having a room where the young could have the sociability of the public house without its temptations.

1898 12 09

As the Mail cart which runs between Huntingdon and Cambridge was proceeding through Hemingford Abbots the horse stumbled and fell on the granite which has recently been laid on the road, and cut its leg so badly that it could not proceed. The driver tried to borrow a horse to continue his journey. Colonel Dougal very kindly lent one of his nags and then his groom had to drive the Mail cart to St Ives where it arrived nearly an hour behind time. Other arrangements were made for continuing the journey to Cambridge

1900 02 19

Water flooded the Waits, Wellington Street and Priory Road, St Ives, to the depth of several feet and inhabitants have had to remove their household effects and live in the upper rooms. Residents in Woolpack Lane could only reach their dwellings by means of planks laid on packing boxes. The Union Workhouse at Hemingford Grey is flooded to a depth of several inches. Thirty-eight houses in Victoria Terrace are flooded and provisions have to be delivered by boat. The flood has passed by nearly an inch the height of the disastrous flood of 1877.

1903 10 15

The marriage of the niece of General Sir John French was celebrated at Hemingford; in order to attend the ceremony the distinguished soldier passed through St Ives where the Mayor and Corporation extended him a civic welcome. The town has witnessed no such excitement since the unveiling of the Cromwell statue. Inhabitants decorated their houses with flags and bunting and a contingent of the Hunts Volunteers, the Fire Brigade and Boys' Brigade paraded with a brass band.

1924 02 19c

The inhabitants of St Ives were horror-struck upon hearing the rumour that the Vicar of Hemingford Grey had been cut to pieces on the railway bridge at Hemingford Abbots. Shortly afterwards the story was

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proved beyond doubt, the remains of the reverend gentleman being conveyed to the vicarage. It is supposed he was making a visit to Houghton to arrange for some special Lenten services and when on the bridge was knocked down by a pilot engine

1924 08 10c

A sturgeon which was caught in Hemingford Grey Mill pit was the subject of interest to a number of spectators at the MacFisheries depot in Petty Cury, Cambridge. It is understood to be the largest fish that has been caught in the locality for some years past. It weighed 185 lbs, was 8ft ½ inch in length, measured 38 inches round the girth and was 19 inches across the tail. It is though the fish reached so high up the river owing to the recent floods. The tail, fins and certain parts of the intestines were removed to the Zoological Laboratories and portions of the flesh and skin will be returned to Hemingford Grey

1926 10 02

A mild sensation has been caused at Hemingford Abbots by a notice on the Rectory Gate. "Young persons and others have adopted a style of dress which is immodest and most objectionable. I disapprove strongly of the short skirts, bare necks and bare arms and hope women will wear more to cover themselves. In fact some cannot be said to be sufficiently clothed. I trust all women not to come to church so attired". It is the work of the rector's warden, Col. Charles Linton, a brisk, short, military-looking man who belongs to the Victorian era & speaks his mind bluntly.

1927 08 09

A butcher's shop belonging to the late Mr Fred Harrison of St Ives, with house, domestic offices & slaughter house was auctioned. Bidding started at £500 and quickly rose to £950; the Peterborough Co-operative Society eventually securing it for £1,000. A freehold old-fashioned thatched cottage at Hemingford Grey, the property of Mr A.V. Woods, was sold for £330

1930 09 03

Huntingdon & Godmanchester Councils are to purchase Houghton, Hemingford & Godmanchester Locks together with Houghton Mill whilst St Ives have acquired the Staunch. They again have control of the locks and the chance of putting them into a proper state of repair. The town depended entirely on the river for its sanitation and it was essential to keep a good head of water in the river. The vendor, Mr Leonard Simpson says he regrets that his personal connection with the river that he loves will be severed. 30 09 03a & b

1931 01 20

St Ives council discussed an application for the interment of a reverend gentleman in the grounds of Madeley Court, Hemingford Grey. The Minister of Health has approved it provided that only one burial took place. The gentleman concerned was not yet dead but they had no power to stop the burial, however much they objected. 31 01 20e

1931 02 27

Death Col H.M. Douglas, Lord Manor Hemingfords – old family – 31 02 27a

1931 03 06

Four Gate pit, Hemingford Grey to be improved by installing sluice gates. 31 03 06e

1931 04 10

St Ives residents are concerned they will be deprived of the use of their river this summer because of engineering repairs at the stanch. The continued low water is not only ruinous to the boating industry but will also affect the acreage under osiers. At present the engineers had only put in a pair of fen gates, which was the easiest task of the lot. They should leave the remainder of the work until autumn. But very soon repairs would be started at Hemingford Lock. 31 04 10g

1947 03 17

In the still of this morning's sunshine there was graphic evidence all over the county of the devastation caused by last night's gales which produced tornado-like gusts screaming over the countryside at a velocity of 99 m.p.h. A tree fell across a Prisoner of War hut and Hemingford Abbots and seriously injured the occupants. When a tree crashed on a P.o.W camp at Whittlesford two Germans were injured. The complete roof of the kitchen of Downing College, Cambridge was blown off.

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1948 02 23

Typhoid at Hemingford Grey Prisoner of War camp – 48 02 23 p7

1949 08 12

Miss Lana Morris, a J. Arthur Rank film starlet is to open the new Hemingfords Peace Commemoration Playing Fields. Still in her teens, she has had a meteoric rise to fame and will be remembered for the part she played in "Spring in Park Lane". Her visit is the culminating point of 4½ years of hard work on the part of the Playing Fields committee who have been able to complete whey they consider to be the best village playing field in the county

1949 08 18

When Mr W. Tomlinson (manager of W.H. Smith's St Ives branch) persuaded his superiors to open a branch in the Hemingfords, little did he know he was soon to open a shop, unique in the whole of the Smiths organisation in as much as it is their only shop with a thatched roof. For many years it was the village bakery, owned by Mr George Darlow. When he retired 10 years ago the shop as such fell into disuse, and now with a coat of bright green paint on the exterior, and books where once the loaves and flour stood, this little shop has come back again with a new lease of life.

1950 09 05

The proposal by the Minister of Agriculture to take over 700 acres of land at Isleham fen has not been confirmed by the Agricultural Land Tribunal who heard an appeal by 33 tenants against it. The Minister's proposals were in the best interests of food production but there was a large volume of evidence that the land could be better farmed in small units. The land had been requisitioned in the early days of the war and administered since by the War Ag. The Tribunal also decided not to confirm proposals in respect of Rectory and Top Farms, Hemingford Abbots.

1955 04 11

A woman and two children were injured at the Cambridgeshire Hunt Point-to-Point Races at Hemingford Abbots when Beacon Ring failed to jump a fence and went into a crowd of 100 spectators. The race is recognised as being hard and gruelling and was made more so due to recent heavy rains. As the race went on several horses fell and others dropped out so there were only four as the winning post came into sight.
55 04 11b

1960 06 03

Not many girls can claim dairy farming as their hobby, but 24 year-old Margaret Stocker of Hemingford Grey helps her brothers farm more than 650 acres of land. Lifting heavy sacks of corn and cattle food does not present any problem; she helps with ploughing, straw baling, feeding the stock, tractor driving or harvesting and makes butter three evenings a week. A lively, interesting girl, she has the clear complexion of someone she spends most of her time out of doors. 60 06 03

1960 06 24

Lucy Boston Hemingford Grey house – 60 06 24

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1961 01 24

Hemingford Grey windmill was built in 1820, shortly before the coming of steam power, and its hand-made wooden machinery is still in good preservation. It is one of the few mills with a fireplace and has been the last working mill in Huntingdonshire. But now the sweeps are no more and the wooden cupola roof has collapsed and there are plans to convert it into an artist's studio. The top two floors would be used as a studio, giving ample height for large canvases, with light coming from a glass domed roof. 61 01 24

1961 08 16

Artist Jeanette Jackson and her husband are converting the old windmill at Hemingford Grey into a house and studio. It is this mill which has inspired her 15 paintings now on exhibition in London. The miller's horse and cart stables have been converted into living quarters and the loose box into a bedroom. The corn store is now a modern kitchen and the whole stable block joined by a glass veranda. The millstones will form the entrance steps and the huge wooden finial which once topped the windmill is to have place of honour on the ground floor. The hardest job was the cutting of the 140-year-old cast iron shaft which carried the sails. 61 08 16

1962 08 30

George Webb, a ballast contractor told a inquiry that if the shortage of sand and gravel gets worse it could seriously affect development, particularly of University buildings. At present it had to be hauled nearly 40 miles adding to the expense. They wanted to use land at Willpack Farm, Hemingford Grey where they already had permission to excavate and build a washing plant. But planners said the access to the main Cambridge-Huntingdon road would be detrimental to road safety 62 08 30a

1962 11 01

The firm of Tom M. Scotney of St Ives, which employs 210 people on important defence and export contracts from some of the leading aircraft companies, will have to turn orders away, an Inquiry was told. The lack of affordable housing means that they cannot attract skilled craftsmen. But proposals to erect staff dwellings on land at London Road, Fenstanton were opposed by planners who say the only access to the town was by the river bridge and it would add to traffic at peak hours. Residential development should be to the north of the town so retaining the identity of the Hemingfords and keeping away from potential flooded area. 62 11 01

1964 02 08

Hemingfords want housing development and a shopping centre – 64 02 08

1964 03 19

Ross Chickens of Hemingford Grey supply 100,000 birds to the market each week. The cheeping in their broiler houses testify to contented birds that were comfortably co-existing on clean shavings, sleeping and eating when they felt like it. The atmosphere is scarcely stuffy at all and an automatic alarm system protects the ventilation against power cuts. The production costs can be 1s.5d per bird in cold weather, but the market price is only 1s.6d. 64 03 19c

1964 08 14

Hemingford Grey and Hemingford Abbots village photo feature – 64 08 14d

1964 09 09

Hemingford Abbots new vicarage – 64 09 09a

1972 03 25

Three separate lines for the proposed Huntingdon by-pass were put forward yesterday at the re-opened by-pass inquiry. The official line proposed by the Department of the Environment would take the traffic along a north-south route past the town. This is being opposed by the county's M.P., Sir David Renton, who favours an East-West line. But yesterday's surprise was a third proposal put forward by a Hemingford Abbots man which would incorporate the town's by-pass in a major route between Ipswich and the M1. He said in the next 10 years the increase of traffic with East Coast ports would boost traffic through Huntingdon to such a degree

1973 07 27

There was more than a sense of achievement in the air at the official opening of Hemingford sewage works. More than 80 guests had first hand experience of that certain something that distinguishes a sewage station from any other kind of plant - because the wind was blowing in the wrong direction. In his opening speech the chairman of St Ives Council Health Committee said "I must apologise for the lack of control of air pollution, but I understand it was not possible to have air fresheners for everyone so you will have to put up with it"

1976 07 02

A meeting of over 100 parents at Hemingford Grey threatened to bring St Ives traffic to a standstill if the County Council does not reverse its plan to end free buses for village children at St Ivo school. A manager said: "If we lose, not one vehicle will cross St Ives bridge on the first day of next term. It would only take one person to stop traffic crossing the narrow bridge. There was derisory laughter when an Education officer rejected suggestions that the St Ives bridge was dangerous to children crossing on bicycles. The effect of 200 children crossing the bridge was not yet known.

1976 08 12

Cambridge Water Company has tentatively agreed to supply water in bulk to Anglian Water Authority areas north of St Ives. The operation would centre on a borderline area with Ramsey and Fenstanton on one side and Upwood and Hemingford Grey on the other. At a drought emergency conference it was announced that rationing would start in the Huntingdon and St Neots areas on October 11th, unless drastic action is taken by the public to conserve supplies.

1976 12 01

Parents with children at several small village schools have lost their fight to stop them from being closed when Cambridgeshire County Council backed closure because they are no longer a viable proposition. The schools are at Madingley, Ashley, Kirtling, Chippenham, Wood Ditton, Hemingford Abbots and Coldham near Wisbech. Some have fewer than 30 pupils and are housed in outdated buildings. Councillor Margaret Shaw said "Village schools are the heart of our county". But hard decisions must be taken in times of financial difficulty. The Council also agreed that more than 70 places it provides at the Perse and Kimbolton schools should in future be 'assisted; and not free

1977 01 21

Parents at Hemingford Abbots have come up with a do-it-yourself plan in a bid to save the village school. It suggests parents teaching at the school as well as cleaning it and serving school meals & is to be studied by the parish council and school managers. It was put forward after the county council confirmed its decision to close the century-old thatched school where two teachers handle two classes of five to 11-year olds. It is due to close in September next year. Mrs Joan Keane, parish council chairman said: "We have got to save the school because it is the only real focal point for the village. If the school goes the village loses its heart and its identity"

1978 07 22

Cambridgeshire County Council is 'giving away' a 138-year-old thatched school at Hemingford Abbots. The school, which catered for 25 pupils, has been closed as an economy measure and because it was set up under a trust the building now returns to the descendants of the persons who set it up, the Herbert family. It was a sad moment for headmaster Mr Gordon Chambers as he said goodbye to the pupils, who will now go to Hemingford Grey school. But the closure will give hours of pleasure to other children for the school swimming pool is to be dismantled and taken to the Wheatfields School in St Ives.